

FIVEPIN BOWLING INSTRUCTION FOR BEGINNERS



INTRODUCTION

In most ways a beginner is easier to teach than a bowler who, without proper instruction, has acquired bad habits over a period of time. That is why it is so important to start a bowler off methodically.

This guide begins with instruction for the younger bowlers, the ones using two hands, and leads you through the transition from two handed to one handed approach.

When you are instructing the children, teach them what comes naturally. They will be more comfortable and more receptive to your ideas. Show them how to do something and then let them try it for a while before moving on to the next item, this will give them a chance to get used to and comfortable with each step before moving on to the next.

Most things you ask them to do will help them right away. Instant progress incites and encourages them to continue learning and try the next step.

Keep in mind that some children will not do what you ask them to do. In these cases, simply move on to the next child and wait for them to come to you for help. When they do you'll know they are ready to learn.

SECTION 1

Will deal with two handed bowlers right from picking up the ball to the delivery.

SECTION 2

Will deal with switching them from two to one hand, using the one step approach.

SECTION 3

Will show the recommended 3 step approach.

This guide will show you how to get bowlers started in the right direction. If you would like to upgrade your instructing abilities at a later date simply ask your bowling centre's management about the coaching courses available which will lead to a certified coaching designation.

SECTION 1

This section deals with two-handed bowlers. Usually these are young bowlers whose hands are not big enough or strong enough to hold the ball properly.

PROPER METHOD OF PICKING UP THE BALL

As silly as it may sound, picking up the ball from the ball rack can be dangerous. If done improperly a returning ball may make contact and result in injuries to fingers and hands, especially little ones. To avoid painful accidents a bowler should always use the correct method of picking up a ball.



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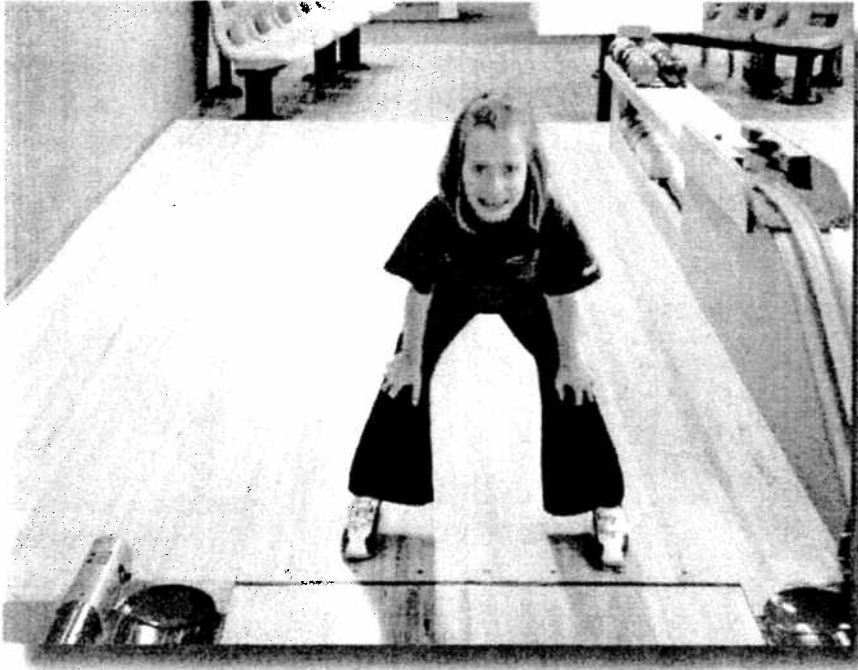
To retrieve a ball safely from the rack the bowler should be facing the pins and should place a hand on each *SIDE* of the ball, avoiding the front and back where returning balls would make contact. Once grasped correctly the bowler can then lift the ball straight up off the rack.



Now that they have safely picked up the ball, they are ready to get set for delivery and throw their first ball.

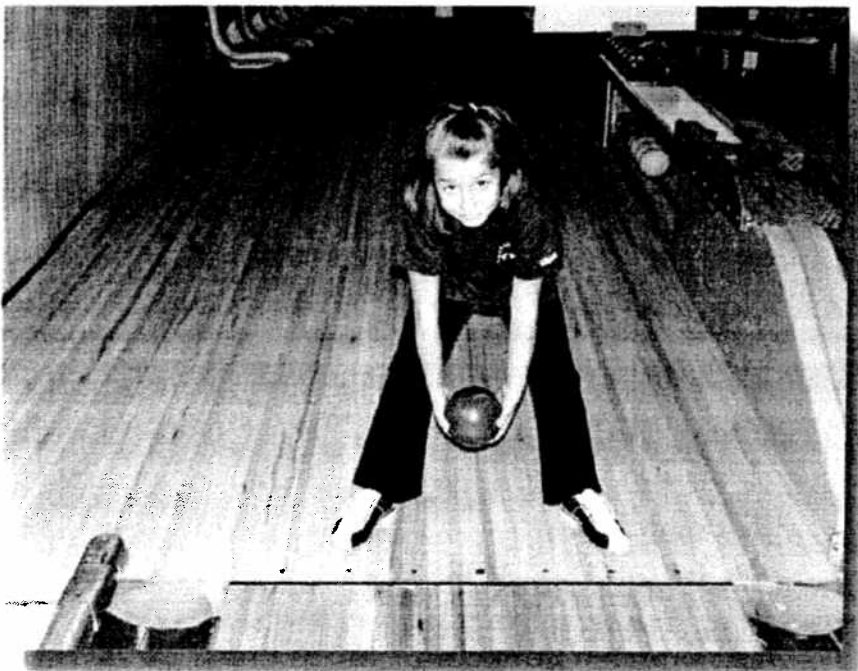
POSITION OF THE FEET

Have the bowler walk up to the foul line and stop 3-4" from the line, place their feet about 20" apart. Make sure the feet are far enough apart that the bowler's arm can swing freely between the legs.



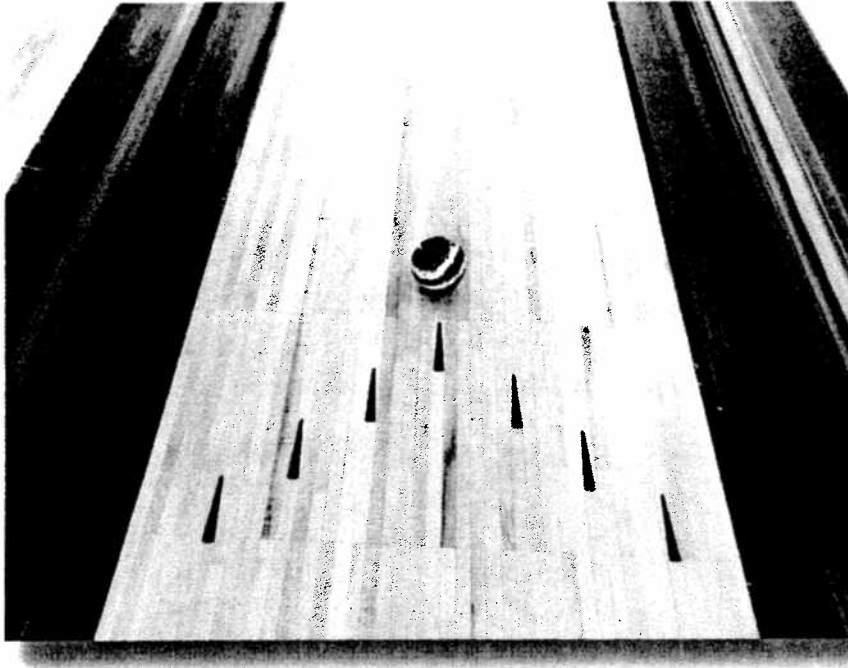
HOLDING THE BALL

Once the bowler has assumed the correct stance at the line make sure they have the ball held firmly in their finger tips with the 3rd and 4th fingers on each hand touching each other and the thumbs as high on the ball as possible.



SPOT BOWLING

Now that you have the bowler to the "point of delivery" they should have a target to shoot at. We are going to use the spots on the lane.



When a bowler is spot bowling they are aiming at a target that is only 15' away (the spots) rather than the pins that are 60' away.

Have them look at their target, swing their arms back and forth a couple of times, release the ball from both hands at the same time past the foul line and keep both arms moving towards their target.

If a bowler is standing correctly, has a good grip on the ball and keeps their arms reaching for the target after delivery, they should be very successful.

Now that the bowlers have the basics of throwing the ball it just takes practice and occasional pointers and reminders from you, the instructor.

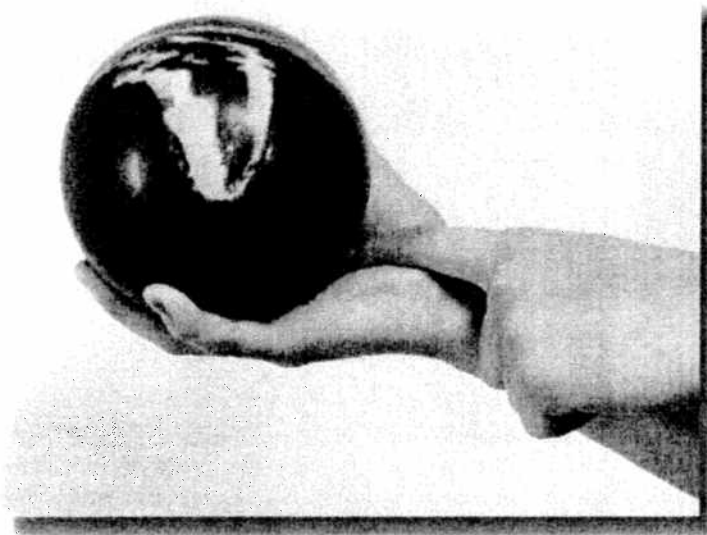
COMMON MISTAKES (for two handed bowlers)

- Not letting the ball go with both hands at the same time
- Bobbing their heads up and down
(this makes it hard to keep an eye on their target)
- Throwing the ball too hard
- Not following through with their hands and arms after releasing the ball
- Not keeping their thumbs up on the ball
- Not lining up straight at the line
- Leaning backwards after the delivery

SECTION 2

This section will deal with bowlers switching from the two-handed delivery to the one-handed delivery. It is also applicable for beginning bowlers who are big enough and strong enough to use the one-handed method.

The first thing you have to do to see if a bowler is ready to start one handed bowling is to ensure they are able to hold the ball properly. To do this, ask the bowler to pick up a ball with their bowling hand and hold it on their finger tips. Then ask the bowler to turn the ball upside down as illustrated in these pictures.



If they do not drop the ball they are ready to try bowling one handed.

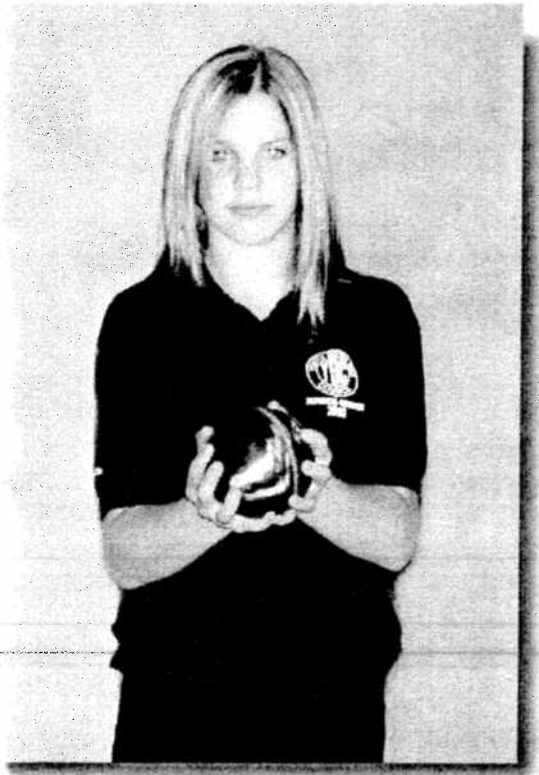
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Now they are ready. Get the bowler to set up one step from the foul line, without a ball in their hand, and have them practice the following:

First, put all their weight on their right leg (left leg for a left handed person), feet together, shoulders square to the foul line, hands close to the chest. *Remember, they don't have a ball in their hands yet.*

Now have the bowler push their hands away from their body until the bowling arm is straight in front of them and let the arm drop down and come back in a pendulum-like swing with the shoulder as the centre point. When the hand is ready to come frontwards again, have the bowler take one step forward, bend at the waist and release the imaginary ball onto the lane.

After a couple of practice runs without the ball the bowler is ready to try it with a ball. Get them to pick up a ball, set up in position as above, with a good grip on the ball, and tell them not to try and throw too hard. After a couple of frames remind them about their target and to keep their arm following through to their target as described in "section 1".



COMMON MISTAKES (for one step bowlers)

- Trying to throw the ball too hard
- Not having a proper grip on the ball
- Too high a back swing (when the ball comes behind the bowler)
- Ball too far away from the bowlers side (on the way back and the way forward)
- Not watching the target
- Shoulder not square to the foul line

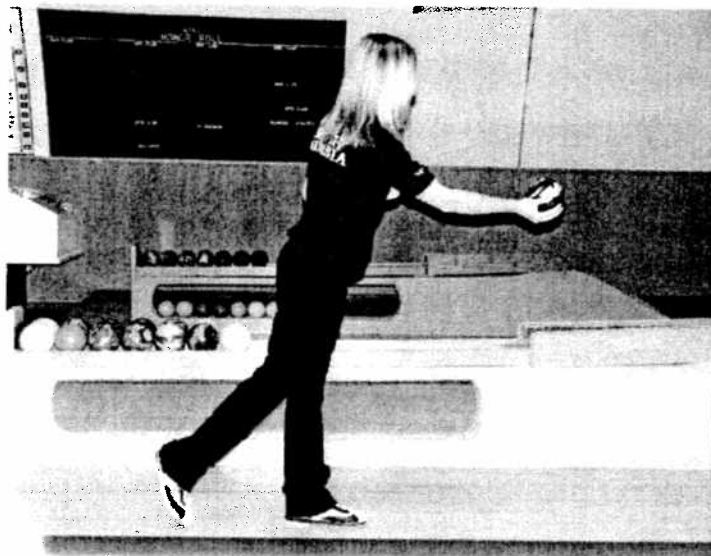
SECTION 3

The most common and most successful way of bowling is the three step approach. Once a bowler has become familiar with the one step approach (section 2) all you have to do is get them to add two more steps that will help them smooth out their bowling technique. The mechanics behind the three step approach are:

NOTE: All steps described are for right handed bowlers - reverse for left handed

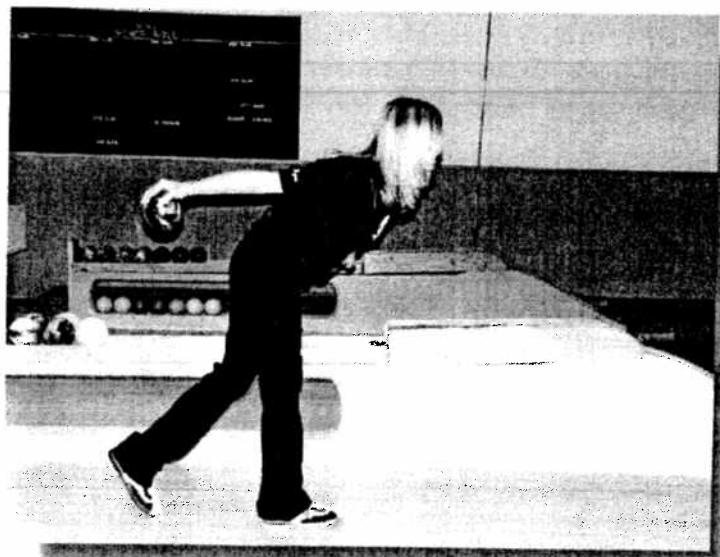
STEP ONE:

All your weight on your right leg, slide your left leg forward while you push the ball away from your body.



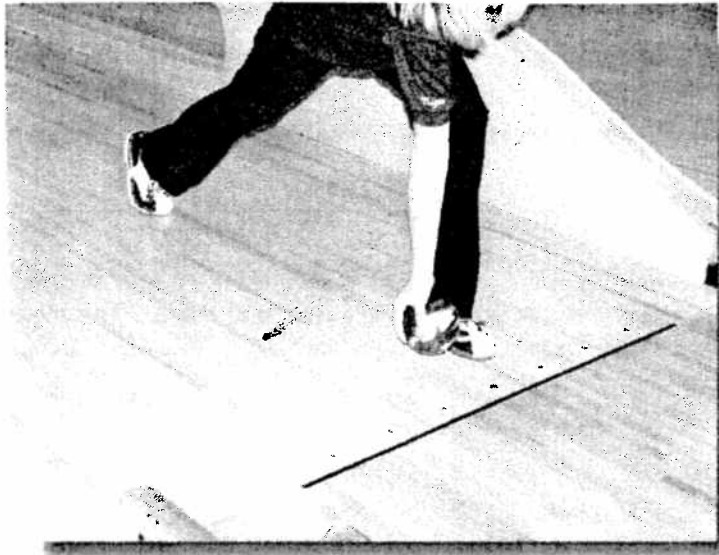
STEP TWO:

Bring the ball back behind you while you step forward with your right foot.



STEP THREE:

Now bring your arm through while you step forwards with your left foot and release the ball in front of you onto the lane.



This is the proper execution of a three step approach.

Now get the bowlers ready. First determine where they are going to begin their approach. To do this, have the bowler stand on the approach, back to the foul line and heels six inches from the foul line. Then, without a ball, have them go through a three step approach AWAY from the foul line. Where their left foot stops after the three steps will be the spot they should begin their approach.

Have the bowlers note where they stopped on the approach and have them go through the three steps once again, still without a ball, but this time towards the pins. If their test approach was accurate they should end up three to six inches from the foul line. Have the bowlers run through the three steps a few times before using a ball.

This is how easy it is:

- On 1 Push away and take the FIRST step with the left foot
- On 2 Back swing while taking the SECOND step with right foot
- On 3 Arm swing forward to make delivery as slide is taken with the left foot, to deliver the ball in front of you onto the lane.

As a bowler becomes more comfortable with the three step approach you can help them along by reminding them of the following:

- * Use proper grip
- * Concentrate on their target
- * Approach in a straight line
- * Keep their shoulders square to the target
- * Use a smooth delivery
- * Keep their arm close to their body
- * Release the ball past the foul line
- * Follow through to their target
- * Don't try and throw too hard
- * Don't approach too fast